

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): An auctioning system for facilitating bidder participation in an auction for the purchase of a lot, comprising:

at least a ~~first one~~ data processing device and a memory in communication with the at least one data processing device, the memory storing instructions which, when executed executable by the at least one data processing device, cause the at least one data processing device to:

- (a) receive a plurality of messages from a plurality of bidders for the lot, each message including a bid for the lot;
- (b) determine whether each of the plurality of messages comprises an acceptable bid;
- (c) for each acceptable bid received from one of the bidders:
 - (i) determine whether said bid is unique;
 - (ii) if the at least one data processing device determines that said bid is not unique:
 - (A) cause a first bid acceptance message to be sent by SMS to a communication device of said bidder, said first bid acceptance message including a notification that said bid is not unique; and
 - (B) charge said bidder for sending said first bid acceptance message;
 - (iii) if the at least one data processing device determines that said bid is unique, determine whether said bid is a lowest unique bid;
 - (iv) if the at least one data processing device determines that said bid is the lowest unique bid: [[,]]

- (A) cause send a second bid acceptance message to be sent by SMS to the communication device of each of said bidder, said second bid acceptance message including a notification that said bid is the lowest unique bid; and
 - (B) charge said bidder for sending said second bid acceptance message bidders notifying the bidder of the status of the bidder's bid; and
 - (v) if the at least one data processing device determines that said bid is unique but not the lowest unique bid:
 - (A) cause a third bid acceptance message to be sent by SMS to the communication device of said bidder, said third bid acceptance message including a notification that said bid is unique but not the lowest unique bid; and
 - (B) charge said bidder for sending said third bid acceptance message; and
- ~~charge each bidder for sending the bid acceptance message; and~~
- (d) at a close of the auction, determine which one of the bidders is a bidder associated with a the lowest unique bid for the lot, wherein, at a close of the auction, the lowest unique bid is a winning bid in the auction for the purchase of the lot, wherein at least one acceptable bid is not a the winning bid.

Claim 2 (previously presented): The auctioning system of claim 1, wherein the plurality of messages are received via SMS messaging.

Claim 3 (currently amended): The auctioning system of claim 1, wherein the instructions, when executed by the at least one data processing device, cause the at least one data processing device to, for each acceptable bid received from one of the bidders, are further executable to charge each said bidder for sending the first, second, or third bid acceptance message using~~by sending the bid acceptance message by a reverse billed SMS message.~~

Claim 4 (currently amended): The auctioning system of claim 1, wherein the instructions, when executed by the at least one data processing device, cause the at least one data processing device to ~~are further executable to limit each bidder up to a maximum number of bids per auction.~~

Claims 5 to 8 (canceled)

Claim 9 (currently amended): The auctioning system of claim 1, wherein the instructions, when executed by the at least one data processing device, cause the at least one data processing device to either:

- (a) for each of the messages received from the bidders, the received bidder messages are passed~~pass said message~~ at least partially over the internet before processing the bid; or
- (b) for each the bid acceptance message sent to a bidder, messages are passed~~pass said bid acceptance message~~ at least partially over the internet before ~~being sent~~sending said bid acceptance message by SMS.

Claim 10 (currently amended): The auctioning system of claim 1, wherein the instructions, when executed by the at least one data processing device, cause the at least one data processing device to ~~are executable to handle communication~~ communicate with the bidders by software in real time.

Claim 11 (canceled)

Claim 12 (currently amended): The auctioning system of claim 26, wherein the instructions, when executed by the at least one data processing device, cause the at least one data processing device ~~are further executable to, for at least one of the bid messages sent by one of the bidders:~~

~~receive an auction identifier data item with one of the bid data items, the auction identifier data item being derived from the same said bid message sent by a bidder as the bid data item; and~~

~~use the said auction identifier data item to determine an auction corresponding to the auction identifier data item.~~

Claim 13 (currently amended): The auctioning system of claim 26, wherein the instructions, when executed by the at least one data processing device, cause the at least one data processing device ~~are further executable to, for at least one of the bid data items:~~

~~validate one of the said bid data item items to determine whether a corresponding bid is an acceptable bid for the auction.~~

Claim 14 (currently amended): The auctioning system of claim 26, wherein the instructions, when executed by the at least one data processing device, cause the at least one data processing device ~~are further executable to:~~

- (a) poll a message store to identify new bid messages; and
- (b) for at least one of the new bid messages associated with a bid:
 - (i) use a mobile phone telephone number data item to determine whether ~~one of the bids~~ said bid is associated with a live session for ~~an a first auction; and~~
 - (ii) if it is then said bid is associated with a live session for the first auction, load loading message data into a first message object;
 - (iii) if ~~one of the bids~~ said bid is not associated with a ~~the~~ live session for the first auction, then use an auction identifier data item to determine whether ~~the one of the bids~~ said bid is for ~~an a second auction and, if it~~ said bid is associated with the second auction, then load the message data into a second message object; and
 - (iv) pass the message object to an auction application.

Claim 15 (currently amended): The auctioning system of claim 26, wherein the instructions, when executed by the at least one data processing device, cause the at least one data processing device ~~are further executable to, for each of the bid data items:~~

~~check~~ determine whether one of the said bid data item ~~items~~ is in the correct bid units; and

if said bid data item is not in the correct bid units, then convert the one of the bid data items ~~said bid data item~~ into the correct bid units.

Claim 16 (currently amended): The auctioning system of claim 26, wherein the instructions, when executed by the at least one data processing device, cause the at least one data processing device ~~are further executable to generate a unique identifier for each received bid data item received.~~

Claim 17 (currently amended): The auctioning system of claim 13, wherein the instructions, when executed by the at least one data processing device, cause the at least one data processing device ~~executable to validate the one of the~~ each of the bid data items ~~include by~~ at least one of the following:

~~instructions executable to determine~~ determining whether an ~~the~~ auction is active;

~~instructions executable to determine~~ determining whether a bid corresponding to the one of the said bid data item ~~items~~ exceeds a maximum number of bids for the bidder of said bid data item; and

~~instructions executable to determine~~ determining whether the one of the said bid data item ~~items~~ falls within a range of acceptable bid values.

Claim 18 (currently amended): The auctioning system of claim 26, wherein the instructions, when executed by the at least one data processing device, cause the at least one data processing device ~~executable to, for each bid data item sent by one of the bidders that comprises an acceptable bid, for each acceptable unique bid, determine whether one of the bid data items~~ said bid is the ~~current-lowest unique bid for the auction further comprise instructions executable to~~ by:

(a) ~~carry out a look~~ looking up of a database of stored bid data items for the auction;

(b) ~~determine~~ determining whether the number of stored bids at a bid data item value is zero;

(c) ~~if the number of stored bids at the bid data item value is zero, then carry out a look~~ looking up of the database of stored bid data items for the auction to determine the ~~current~~ a lowest unique bid value; and

(d) ~~determine~~ determining whether the ~~a~~ bid data item value is less than the ~~current-lowest unique bid value~~.

Claim 19 (currently amended): The auctioning system of claim 26, further wherein the comprising instructions, when executed by the at least one data processing device, cause the at least one data processing device executable to, for each of the bid acceptance messages, marshal the said bid acceptance message by, which comprise instructions executable to:

- (a) selecting select a message template for the said bid acceptance message;
- (b) looking look-up stored variable data items; and
- (c) populating populate the said selected message template with the said variable data items.

Claim 20 (currently amended): The auctioning system of claim 26, wherein the instructions, when executed by the at least one data processing device, cause the at least one data processing device executable to, for each of the bid acceptance messages, send the said bid acceptance message include instructions executable to by loading load a message object with message data and bidder data.

Claim 21 (currently amended): The auctioning system of claim 20, wherein the instructions, when executed by the at least one data processing device, cause the at least one data processing device to, for each of the bid acceptance messages, sending send said bid the acceptance message further includes by placing the message object in a message queue table.

Claim 22 (currently amended): The auctioning system of claim 21, wherein the instructions, when executed by the at least one data processing device, cause the at least one data processing device to, for each of the bid acceptance messages, sending send said bid the acceptance message further includes by:

- (a) polling the message queue table to identify new bid messages; and
- (b) passing any new bid messages to an aggregator service for transmission as an SMS message to the bidder bidders of said new bids.

Claim 23 (currently amended): The auctioning system of claim 22, wherein the instructions, when executed by the at least one data processing device, cause the at least one data processing device ~~are further executable~~ to receive a receipt ID from the aggregator for the message passed to the aggregator and store the receipt ID when received.

Claim 24 (currently amended): The auctioning system of claim 23, wherein the instructions, when executed by the at least one data processing device, cause the at least one data processing device ~~are further executable~~ to determine whether the receipt ID has been received and update a status associated with the sent message.

Claim 25 (currently amended): The auctioning system of claim 24, wherein the instructions, when executed by the at least one data processing device, cause the at least one data processing device ~~are further executable to:~~

- (a) identify a group of lowest unique bids; and
- (b) determine the lowest bid of the group of lowest unique bids for which the bid acceptance message has been received.

Claim 26 (currently amended): An auctioning system for facilitating bidder participation in an auction for the purchase of a lot, comprising:

at least ~~a first one~~ data processing device and a memory in communication with the at least one data processing device, the memory storing instructions which, when executed executable by the processor at least one data processing device, cause the at least one data processing device to:

- (a) receive a plurality of bid data items over a computer network to which the a computer system is connected, each bid data item being derived from a bid message sent by one of a plurality of biddersbidder;
- (b) determine whether each bid data item comprises an acceptable bid;
~~prior to a close of the auction, determine whether each bid data item is the current lowest unique bid for the auction;~~
- (c) for each bid data item sent by one of the bidders that comprises an acceptable bid, for each acceptable bid, generate a bid acceptance message wherein:
 - (i) determine whether said bid is unique;
 - (ii) if the at least one data processing device determines that said bid is not unique:
 - (A) determine a phone number of a communication device of said bidder;
 - (B) using said determined phone number, cause a first bid acceptance message to be sent at least partially over the computer network by a reverse-billed SMS message to the communication device of said bidder, said first bid acceptance message including a notification that said bid is not unique; and
 - (B) charge said bidder for sending said first bid acceptance message;
 - (iii) if the at least one data processing device determines that said bid is unique, determine whether said bid is a lowest unique bid;

(iv) if the at least one data processing device determines that said bid is the lowest unique bid:

(A) if it is determined that the bid data item is the current lowest unique bid, then to generate using said determined phone number, cause a second bid acceptance message to be sent at least partially over the computer network by a reverse-billed SMS message to the communication device of said bidder, said second bid acceptance message including a notification that said bid is indicating that the bid is the current the lowest unique bid; and

(B) charge said bidder for sending said second bid acceptance message; and

(v) if the at least one data processing device determines that said bid is unique but not the lowest unique bid:

(A) , and if it is determined that the bid data item is not the current lowest unique bid, then to generate using said determined phone number, cause a third bid acceptance message to be sent at least partially over the computer network by a reverse-billed SMS message to the communication device of said bidder, said third bid acceptance message including a notification that said bid indicating that the bid is unique but not the current lowest unique bid; and

(B) charge said bidder for sending said third bid acceptance message; and

determine a destination telecommunications device phone number for the acceptance message; and

send the acceptance message, at least partially over the computer network, for transmission to the bidder at the destination telecommunications device by a reverse billed SMS message, wherein,

(d) at the close of the auction, determine which one of the bidders is associated with the bid data item comprising the a-lowest unique bid, wherein the lowest unique bid is a winning bid in the auction for the purchase of the lot, wherein at least one acceptable bid is not a-the winning bid.

Claims 27 and 28 (canceled)

Claim 29 (currently amended): The auctioning system of claim 1, wherein the instructions, when executed by the at least one data processing device, cause the at least one data processing device ~~are further executable to:~~

determine that the auction ~~of~~ for the lot has ended; and

cause an send a-auction winner notification message to be sent by SMS to the communication device of the bidder whose bid is the lowest unique bid, said auction winner notification message including a notification that the bidder has placed a-the winning bid.

Claim 30 (currently amended): The auctioning system of claim 26, wherein the instructions, when executed by the at least one data processing device, cause the at least one data processing device ~~are further executable to:~~

determine that the auction ~~of~~ for the lot has ended; and

cause an send a-auction winner notification message to be sent by SMS to the communication device of the bidder whose bid is the lowest unique bid, said auction winner notification message including a notification that the bidder has placed a-the winning bid.

Claim 31 (new): The auctioning system of Claim 1, wherein the instructions, when executed by the at least one data processing device, cause the at least one data processing device to, for each acceptable bid received from one of the bidders, determine whether said bid is unique by comparing an amount of said bid to an amount of each acceptable bid received prior to said bid.

Claim 32 (new): The auctioning system of Claim 1, wherein the instructions, when executed by the at least one data processing device, cause the at least one data processing device to, for each acceptable bid received from one of the bidders, if the at least one data processing device determines that said bid is the lowest unique bid:

- (a) determine whether said bid changes from being the lowest unique bid to being unique but not the lowest unique bid by comparing an amount of said bid to an amount of a subsequent acceptable bid received from one of the bidders; and
- (b) if the at least one data processing device determines that the amount of said subsequent bid is lower than the amount of said first-received bid, cause a first status change notification message to be sent to the communication device of said bidder of said first-received bid by SMS, said first status change notification message including a notification that said first-received bid is no longer the lowest unique bid but is unique.

Claim 33 (new): The auctioning system of Claim 32, wherein if the at least one data processing device determines that the amount of said subsequent bid is lower than the amount of said first-received bid, said first-received bid cannot be the winning bid.

Claim 34 (new): The auctioning system of Claim 1, wherein the instructions, when executed by the at least one data processing device, cause the at least one data processing device to, for each acceptable bid received from one of the bidders, if the at least one data processing device determines that said bid is the lowest unique bid:

- (a) determine whether said bid changes from being the lowest unique bid to not being unique by comparing an amount of said bid to an amount of a subsequent acceptable bid received from one of the bidders; and
- (b) if the at least one data processing device determines that the amount of the subsequent bid is equal to the amount of said first-received bid, cause a second status change notification message to be sent to the communication device of said bidder of said first-received bid by SMS, said second status change notification message including a notification that said first-received bid is no longer unique.

Claim 35 (new): The auctioning system of Claim 34, wherein if the at least one data processing device determines that the amount of said subsequent is equal to the amount of said first-received bid, neither said first-received bid nor said subsequent bid can be the winning bid.

Claim 36 (new): The auctioning system of Claim 1, wherein the instructions, when executed by the at least one data processing device, cause the at least one data processing device to, for each acceptable bid received from one of the bidders, if the at least one data processing device determines that said bid is unique but not the lowest unique bid:

- (i) determine whether said bid changes from being unique to not being unique by comparing an amount of said bid to an amount of a subsequent acceptable bid received from one of the bidders; and
- (ii) if the at least one data processing device determines that the amount of said subsequent bid is equal to the amount of said first-received bid, cause a second status change notification to be sent to the communication device of said bidder of said first-received bid by SMS, said second status change notification message including a notification that said first-received bid is no longer unique.

Claim 37 (new): The auctioning system of Claim 36, wherein if the at least one data processing device determines that said first-received bid is unique but not the lowest unique bid, said first-received bid cannot be the winning bid.

Claim 38 (new): An auctioning system for facilitating bidder participation in an auction for the purchase of a lot, comprising:

at least one data processing device and a memory in communication with the at least one data processing device, the memory storing instructions which, when executed by the at least one data processing device, cause the at least one data processing device to:

- (a) receive a plurality of messages from a plurality of bidders for the lot, each message including a bid for the lot;
- (b) determine whether each of the plurality of messages comprises an acceptable bid;
- (c) for each acceptable bid received from one of the bidders:
 - (i) determine whether said bid is unique;
 - (ii) if the at least one data processing device determines that said bid is not unique:
 - (A) cause a first bid acceptance message to be sent by SMS to a communication device of said bidder, said first bid acceptance message including a notification that said bid is not unique; and
 - (B) charge said bidder for sending said first bid acceptance message;
 - (iii) if the at least one data processing device determines that said bid is unique, determine whether said bid is a lowest unique bid;
 - (iv) if the at least one data processing device determines that said bid is the lowest unique bid:
 - (A) cause a second bid acceptance message to be sent by SMS to the communication device of said bidder, said second bid acceptance message including a notification that said bid is the lowest unique bid;
 - (B) charge said bidder for sending said second bid acceptance message;

- (C) determine whether said bid changes from being the lowest unique bid to being unique but not the lowest unique bid by comparing an amount of said bid to an amount of a subsequent acceptable bid received from one of the bidders and, if the at least one data processing device determines that said first-received bid changes from being the lowest unique bid to being unique but not the lowest unique bid, cause a first status change notification message to be sent by SMS to the communication device of said bidder of said first-received bid, said first status change notification message including a notification that said first-received bid is no longer the lowest unique bid but is unique; and
- (D) determine whether said bid changes from being the lowest unique bid to not being unique by comparing the amount of said bid to an amount of a subsequent acceptable bid received from one of the bidders and, if the at least one data processing device determines that said first-received bid changes from being the lowest unique bid to not being unique, cause a second status change notification message to be sent by SMS to the communication device of said bidder of said first-received bid, the second status change notification message including a notification that said first-received bid is no longer unique; and
- (v) if the at least one data processing device determines that said bid is unique but not the lowest unique bid:
 - (A) cause a third bid acceptance message to be sent by SMS to the communication device of said bidder, said third bid acceptance message including a notification that said bid is unique but not the lowest unique bid;
 - (B) charge said bidder for sending said third bid acceptance

message; and

- (C) determine whether said bid changes from being unique to not being unique by comparing the amount of said bid to an amount of a subsequent acceptable bid received from one of the bidders and, if the at least one data processing device determines that said first-received bid changes from being unique to not being unique, cause the second status change notification message to be sent by SMS to the communication device of said bidder of said first-received bid, said second status change notification message including a notification that said first-received bid is no longer unique; and
- (d) at a close of the auction, determine which one of the bidders is associated with the lowest unique bid, wherein the lowest unique bid is a winning bid in the auction for the purchase of the lot, wherein at least one acceptable bid is not the winning bid.